

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 972

By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Steve Cropper for his myriad accomplishments and contributions to this State.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to specially recognize those distinguished and talented citizens of Tennessee whose activities in the arts have enhanced the cultural life of this State, this Nation, and the entire world; and

WHEREAS, one such eminent and talented Tennessean is Steve Cropper, who has made countless contributions to the music industry and has enhanced the airwaves of this Nation with his melodious brilliance for more than four decades; and

WHEREAS, born on October 21, 1941, on a farm near Dora, Missouri, Mr. Cropper was exposed to a wealth of country music before moving to Memphis at the age of nine; and

WHEREAS, captivated by the sounds of Gospel, R & B, and nascent Rock 'n' Roll which echoed throughout Memphis, Mr. Cropper developed a deep love of music and acquired his first guitar at the age of fourteen; and

WHEREAS, inspired by guitar legends Tal Farlow, Chuck Berry, Jimmy Reed, Chet Atkins, Lowman Pauling, and Billy Butler, Mr. Cropper began his tenure in music as a part of the Royal Spades and of the Mar-Keys, and, after cultivating his musical skills, he debuted on American Bandstand in 1961; and

WHEREAS, one year later, Mr. Cropper joined the harmonic prowess of Booker T. Jones, Al Jackson, and Lewie Steinberg to form Booker T. and the MG's; the group produced such hit albums as *Green Onions*, *Soul Dressing*, and many others under the Stax Records label; and

WHEREAS, in the years following the success of the MG's, Mr. Cropper established himself as not only an extraordinary guitarist and songwriter, but also as a stellar A and R man,

a talented engineer, and a successful producer; he was involved in virtually every record issued by Stax from 1961 through 1970; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cropper left the Stax label in the fall of 1970 to start the Trans-Maximus recording studio and record company along with Jerry Williams and former Mar-Keys band mate Ronnie Stoots; and

WHEREAS, penning some of the most touching lyrics in the music industry, Mr. Cropper collaborated with various other writers to produce such classics as "Knock on Wood," "In the Midnight Hour", and "(Sittin' On) The Dock of the Bay," which won a Grammy for Best Rhythm and Blues Song in 1968; and

WHEREAS, as a renowned producer, Mr. Cropper generated timeless tracks by such notable artists as Wilson Pickett, Tower of Power, John Mellencamp, Jose Feliciano, Poco, John Prine, and Otis Redding; and

WHEREAS, this distinguished guitarist has lent his talents to the albums of Rod Stewart, Peter Frampton, Art Garfunkle, Ringo Starr, and Wynonna Judd and has toured with Neil Young and Jimmy Buffet; and

WHEREAS, after briefly reuniting with the MG's in 1977, Mr. Cropper joined with the Blues Brothers Band in the late 1970s and appeared in several major motion pictures and on numerous TV shows; he resumed his solo career by recording two albums, *Playin' My Thang* and *Night After Night*, for MCA in 1980 and 1982, respectively; and

WHEREAS, the MG's reunited once again in 1990 to tour with Neil Young, and, in 1994, they released their first album in twenty years; the "Cruisin" cut from *That's the Way it Should Be* won a Grammy for Best Pop Instrumental Performance at the 37th Annual Grammy Awards; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his ongoing commitment with the MG's and the Blues Brothers, Mr. Cropper organized his own label, Play it, Steve! Records; the inaugural release, entitled *Play It, Steve!*, debuted in February of 1998; and

WHEREAS, currently a resident of Nashville, Steve Cropper continues to be a prominent figure on the national music scene and has been honored with an induction into the Rock and

Roll Hall of Fame and the Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame and garnered recognition as the second-greatest guitarist of all time by *Mojo Magazine*; and

WHEREAS, still in great demand, Mr. Cropper has recently showcased his musical genius on albums by Paul Simon, Ringo Starr, Buddy Guy, and Johnny Lang, as well as contributing to works by Elton John and Steppenwolf; he has also produced the last three albums by Joe Louis Walker; and

WHEREAS, in addition to owning Insomnia Studio, Mr. Cropper is a current member of the Burger King All Stars, which is also composed of Billy Preston, Felix Cavaliere of The Rascals, and Mark Farner of Grand Funk Railroad; and

WHEREAS, Steve Cropper is a public-minded citizen and, as a participant in the 2nd Annual Fishing for a Cure and Bass Bash and Beach Party, he helped raise \$35,000 to support the T.J. Martell Foundation, which funds local research into the cures and treatment of cancer, leukemia, and AIDS; and

WHEREAS, exhibiting the admirable characteristics of perseverance and determination, Steve Cropper has established himself as a Tennessean of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, this legislative body wholeheartedly recognizes the success that Mr. Cropper has achieved and applauds his many laudable contributions to the music industry, his community, and this State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Steve Cropper for his many achievements in and contributions to the music industry, wholeheartedly applaud his unwavering dedication to those less fortunate members of society, and extend to him our best wishes for every future success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.